

Although the National Park Service feasibility study does not in itself mark Buffalo Bayou as a National Heritage Area, it is the first step in that process.

As a lifetime Houston resident, I believe that designating Buffalo Bayou as a National Heritage Area would further the redevelopment of the community by bringing more Federal resources to our area. Such a designation would highlight the historic significance of this waterway and the surrounding community.

Buffalo Bayou is the original industrial spine of Houston and was the building block for what is now the Port of Houston, the Nation's second largest port. In addition, the numerous historic sites and events which have taken place in and around Buffalo Bayou makes this waterway a perfect candidate for a National Heritage Area designation.

All these facts will be borne out as the National Park Service begins to contact our local sponsor, the Buffalo Bayou Partnership. Anne Olson, Executive Director of the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, brings tremendous organizational and fund-raising abilities to this effort, and I will continue to work closely with her organization to incorporate this designation into the overall master plan for east Harris County. It is the strong public-private partnership already in place that will help gain a positive recommendation from the National Park Service on our designation request.

I believe local support is vital for making a National Heritage Area work. Madam Speaker, I am working in close collaboration with our local elected officials to map out an action plan that will provide maximum local flexibility in determining how our local history will be told if we receive such a National Heritage Area. This legislation has the strong support of both our Harris County Judge Robert Eckles and our Houston Mayor Lee Brown, both of whom recognize that our community has a historic story to tell our visitors. Their help has been invaluable. I would like to thank them for their assistance in this endeavor.

Madam Speaker, I again thank the committee and the staff for their efforts.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1776, The "Buffalo Bayou National Heritage Area Study Act." This legislation is a welcome recognition of the historical background of my fair city, Houston, TX, and an opportunity to expand the rich cultural landscape of the American Southwest.

The Buffalo Bayou area in Texas helped to establish an economic foothold for settlers of the gulf coast region. Without this early industry, which included both shipping and refining petroleum, the Buffalo Bayou area might not have developed into the thriving metropolis it has become.

Madam Speaker, though the factual importance of Buffalo Bayou is clear, its significance to the socioeconomic landscape at place in

America is not as fully known. This legislation will remedy that situation by authorizing the Department of the Interior to study the feasibility of establishing the Buffalo Bayou National Heritage Area in Houston. Passage of this legislation will allow this agency to analyze and document the area's natural, historic, and cultural resources. As I am confident that such a studies will lead to a full recognition of the wealth of Americana associated with what we now know as Houston, TX.

Madam Speaker, many Americans are unaware that many of this nation's most significant events have taken place in Texas. For example, Juneteenth, which is recognized by several States as the official holiday of Black emancipation, is based on events that took place in Texas. H.R. 1776 will help to discover and publicize other significant places and events in the development of our nation and way of life. By cooperating with local residents, public and private concerns, all relevant parties will be given an opportunity to work together to shape the collective memory of this historical treasure.

H.R. 1776 is an excellent example of the effective use Interior Department funds, and I encourage all Members to support this legislation.

Mr. BENTSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1776, which authorizes a National Park Service study of a Buffalo Bayou National Heritage Area in Houston, Texas. I applaud our colleague Congressman GENE GREEN for introducing it. The City of Houston was founded on the banks of Buffalo Bayou by the Allen brothers and there Houston's future as a world shipping center was born. With the help of the U.S. Congress and the determination of early local leaders like Congressman Joseph C. Hutcheson, Congressman Thomas Henry Ball, and Mayor H. Baldwin Rice, the Houston Ship Channel was born out of the mouth of Buffalo Bayou.

Although Houston has achieved great prominence in maritime trade, Buffalo Bayou has means more to Houston than just commerce. Buffalo Bayou retains a great scenic beauty as it flows across Harris County through Memorial Park and Downtown to the San Jacinto River and has the potential to provide a great deal more scenic, open space, and historic community value.

This legislation will allow the National Park Service to investigate the potential for a Buffalo Bayou national heritage area. I congratulate my colleague and friend GENE GREEN for his hard work on the bill, and I believe the Park Service will find the Buffalo Bayou a unique historic cultural area deserving of financial and planning assistance for historic preservation, revitalization, and beautification efforts. If the Park Service and Congress both approve the Buffalo Bayou Heritage Area, Houston communities will have access to \$10 million in improvement funds along with Park Service planning expertise. Today is the first step towards obtaining a Park Service commitment to enhancing the birthplace of Houston, our Nation's fourth largest city.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1776, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING PROFOUND SORROW OF THE CONGRESS FOR DEATH AND INJURIES SUFFERED BY FIRST RESPONDERS IN AFTERMATH OF TERRORIST ATTACKS ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 233) expressing the profound sorrow of the Congress for the death and injuries suffered by first responders as they endeavored to save innocent people in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 233

Whereas law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel are collectively known as first responders;

Whereas following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, first responders reacted immediately in evacuating and rescuing innocent people from the buildings;

Whereas first responders also arrived quickly at the crash site of United Airlines flight 93 in southwestern Pennsylvania;

Whereas if it were not for the heroic efforts of first responders immediately after the terrorist attacks, numerous additional casualties would have resulted from the attacks;

Whereas as the first emergency personnel to arrive at the scenes of the terrorist attacks, first responders risked their lives in their efforts to save others;

Whereas while first responders were bravely conducting the evacuation and rescue after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, the two towers of that complex collapsed, and many first responders themselves became victims of the attack;

Whereas the everyday well-being, security, and safety of Americans depend upon the official duties of first responders;

Whereas in addition to their official duties, first responders around the Nation participate in planning, training, and exercises to respond to terrorist attacks;

Whereas emergency managers, public health officials, and medical care providers also invest significant time in planning, training, and exercises to better respond to terrorist attacks in the United States;

Whereas the Nation has not forgotten the heroic efforts of first responders after the bombing of the World Trade Center on February 26, 1993, and the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 19, 1995;

Whereas there are numerous Federal programs that help prepare first responders from across the Nation, including the Domestic Preparedness Program and other training and exercise programs administered by the Department of Justice;

Whereas there are also domestic preparedness programs administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which together with the programs of the Department

of Justice support State and local first responders with funding, training, equipment acquisition, technical assistance, exercise planning, and execution;

Whereas many of the first responders who participate in such programs do so on their own time;

Whereas an effective response of local first responders to a terrorist attack saves lives; and

Whereas in response to a terrorist attack, first responders are exposed to a high risk of bodily harm and death as the first line of defense of the United States in managing the aftermath of the attack: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) expresses its profound sorrow for the death and injuries suffered by first responders as they endeavored to save innocent people in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001;

(2) expresses its deepest sympathies to the families and loved ones of the fallen first responders;

(3) honors and commends the first responders who participated in evacuating and rescuing the innocent people in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon after the terrorist attacks;

(4) encourages the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to pay respect to the first responder community for their service in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks and their continuing efforts to save lives; and

(5) encourages all levels of government to continue to work together to effectively coordinate emergency preparedness by providing the infrastructure, funding, and inter-agency communication and cooperation necessary to ensure that when another terrorist attack occurs, first responders will be as prepared as possible to respond to the attack effectively.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would first note that H. Con. Res. 233 was discharged from committee consideration and has been expeditiously brought to the floor for immediate action. Although this is not the normal process, in the interest of time the committee will occasionally discharge consideration, particularly for a measure as important as this. What the House will do in the next 40 minutes is important, and we will discuss, and this piece of legislation will honor true American heroes.

H. Con. Res. 233 recognizes the sacrifice and dedication of all of the emergency responders who risked their lives assisting in relief efforts following the terrorist attacks of September 11. Tragically, many of these initial responders became victims of the attacks and did not survive the collapse of the World Trade Center. Three hundred forty-three firefighters, 23 police officers, and 74 members of the Port Authority are all dead and many are still missing. Twenty-eight engine compa-

nies suffered losses in New York, and another 25 ladder companies. The Fire Department lost its chaplain and its heroic chief. In fact, Madam Speaker, so many commanders were lost that fateful morning that Mayor Giuliani needed to promote 168 new officers 2 days later. The sense of duty that these heroic men and women felt on the morning of September 11 is nothing short of extraordinary. Those on-duty, off-duty, retired, on medical leave and on vacation rushed to the scene. One group of firefighters even commandeered a city bus in order to get to the scene. They went in so thousands more could get out.

James Coyle, who was a rookie firefighter at age 26, was on vacation. He rushed to the scene to join Ladder Company No. 3 that morning and it cost him his life. Walwyn Stuart had left his job as a New York City narcotics cop when his wife became pregnant. He wanted safer work and he joined the Port Authority police. The morning of September 11 he was on duty at the PATH station at the World Trade Center. He helped evacuate the station and then went into the North Tower to save others. He has left behind a wife and a 1-year-old daughter.

James Corrigan, the World Trade Center fire marshal, is credited with leading a team of his men to get dozens of children out of day care facilities that morning. He and five of his colleagues died, but not before saving the children, some of whom were trapped because the exits near the day care center were clogged with folks trying to rush out of the building. Corrigan and his men broke through windows and carried the children through shattered glass to safety before rushing back in to help others.

Madam Speaker, there are so many stories of heroism and courage that have fortified our country since September 11. Americans have the most profound respect for our police and firefighters before and certainly now. These men and women were the first in, and to this day the rescuers have paused only to honor the dead and the missing. There are countless stories of firefighters having their charred, melted boots cut off their feet, of having their wounds bandaged and then defying doctors' orders and returning, battered and exhausted, to Ground Zero to try to find that one living miracle.

As a Nation, we are awed and humbled by their courage, their effort and their sacrifice. We thank those who rushed into the fiery World Trade Center and the Pentagon and rose to the challenge that was the core of their everyday lives and their beloved professions. We grieve for all those rescue workers who gave their lives, for the 4,700 innocent victims of this abhorrent terrorist attack, and for the family members and friends who are left behind.

So many lives were changed forever that morning. Fathers, mothers, sons,

husbands, wives, daughters, coworkers and friends were lost. Those moments of terror forever changed the landscape of too many families in this country. Jean Palombo of Brooklyn, who was the wife of Frank Palombo of Ladder Company 105, became a widow at the age of 41. She is today left to raise 10 children, ages 11 months to 15 years, eight boys and two girls. Gigi Nelson was 8 months pregnant with her first child when her husband, Peter, went into the World Trade Center that morning. He was working overtime with Rescue Company No. 4 on September 11 to help out with the expenses of the new baby. Twenty-five days after the World Trade Center collapsed, Peter Nelson's first child, daughter Lyndsi Ann, was born. When she is old enough, Madam Speaker, she will learn of her father's heroism.

These children and so many others will grow up knowing what America knows, that their parents were heroes in the purest sense of the word. It is fitting that we take this opportunity to consider H. Con. Res. 233 to pay tribute to those first responders who perished while doing their jobs and while saving so many others.

I urge my colleagues to join in support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1630

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS) and many of our colleagues in strong support of this legislation.

House Concurrent Resolution 233 honors and commends the first responders who responded to the call to evacuate and rescue thousands of people at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the crash site of United Flight 93 in Pennsylvania following the horrific events of September 11.

This resolution also expresses our profound sorrow for the emergency service personnel who were injured or perished on September 11 and extends our sympathy to their families. It encourages the President of the United States to issue a proclamation calling upon the American people to support our emergency service workers and encourages all levels of government to continue to work together to coordinate emergency preparedness.

These first responders, our firefighters, law enforcement officers and emergency medical service personnel, risked and gave their lives so that others could get to safety.

In the immediate days following the attack, thousands of the first responders rushed to offer assistance, and many are still working around the clock at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. We are very appreciative for what they have done and continue to do. Without their help, many more would have been injured or perished.

Our Nation's emergency preparedness is dependent upon our local first responders. Federal programs within FEMA and the Department of Justice help prepare and support first responder programs, but the strength of the program nationwide is that the service providers are local. They are often volunteers, and each of them is highly involved in their community.

I strongly encourage all levels of government to work together to more effectively plan and coordinate our Nation's domestic terrorism programs. As we have witnessed, the emergency responders are our first line of defense in the aftermath of a terrorist incident. It is critical that our Nation and our national preparedness programs assist our local first responders by providing them with the best information, training, and equipment.

Madam Speaker, our Nation's first responders deserve our gratitude for their heroic work on September 11 and what they do to protect and help all of us and our families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS), the author of House Concurrent Resolution 233.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Ohio for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and respect and pay homage to the brave American firefighters, police officers, and emergency medical professionals who suffered injury and death as they helped those in need during the terrorist attack on our Nation.

September 11, 2001, stirs many feelings to many people. I feel happy to be an American. Witnessing the heroic actions by these first responders shows that even in the face of senseless violence, there can be good. Knowing that so many people came to the aid of their neighbors proves there is so much goodness in this great land that we all call home.

Just like the first responders 6 years ago in Oklahoma City, the emergency personnel in Manhattan, Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon have done yeomen's work under the most difficult of circumstances. No one woke up that morning to know what would lie ahead. No one had warning or time to prepare that day. It was an immediate reaction of aid and rescuers, a life-saving effort of service to their country.

To the families of the fallen, nothing can bring back the lives of loved ones. But Congress today expresses its profound sorrow while offering its bottomless gratitude. We are sorry you are suffering over the loss of your family and friends. We are grateful for the heroism exhibited by first responders who put their country, their duty and

their love of their neighbors before themselves.

The stories will be told for many years to come. There will be new anecdotes, new names and new faces. They will inspire generations of young first responders and offer reflection for all citizens alike.

First responders plan and train for mass casualties every day, hoping the need for such large and difficult rescue efforts remains an exercise. But September 11 was real. The loss of life and injury to first responders was real. The attacks on our Nation were real.

First responders will be there on the frontline for future tragedies. They will work night and day to rescue and assist the afflicted and the affected and the injured. We must never forget the work that they do. We must never forget the sacrifices that they make.

I thank my colleagues, and especially the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), who has cosponsored this resolution with me; and I urge all Members to support this tribute to the first responders who made the ultimate sacrifice during their service to our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I close by just reminding how often in the year 2001 in today's society, we often throw around the word hero, and we are pretty cavalier about the word hero. But if you want to go and see a real live hero, go look at the men and women who put on the uniforms every day to serve in our fire departments around the country, some on a volunteer basis, those men and women who put on the police uniforms every single day. I might add I am pretty proud to say my father was a police officer, so I know the sacrifices that those men and women make, the selfless commitment that they make to our communities, to our States, to our Nation.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, we say thank you to all of those first responders who go out every day and show us what real heroes are all about.

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding me time; and I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS), for working with me on this resolution, as we have worked on so many other things in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

This resolution was being put together prior to the events of September 11, but the events of September 11 have made us realize even more how fortunate we are to have the first responders. First responders obviously did not start on September 11. They have been there with us for all time; and we are very, very deeply grateful.

The events of September 11 will be with us always. My thoughts and prayers are with all the families affected by this terrible tragedy. Though my heart is heavy, my spirits have been lifted by the incredible heroism and outpouring

of support that we have witnessed since that day.

The American spirit has not been diminished. Instead, it has been energized. On behalf of New York, I want to sincerely thank my colleagues and the American people for their outpouring of support to all of us during these very, very difficult times.

I am so pleased to be here today and have the House of Representatives considering this resolution. It is, of course, timely and, of course, very warranted.

I think it is particularly poignant that the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS) is the sponsor of this resolution. I am proud to be a sponsor with him. The people of Oklahoma also know personally of the tragedy of terrorism.

I do not know of anyone who does not get choked up when we hear the stories of people rushing away from the World Trade Center on the terrible day of September 11. But when they were rushing away, they were passing firefighters and police officers and emergency medical personnel who were running toward the World Trade Center. These first responders did not think of their own lives; they thought of saving other lives.

So this resolution honors and commends the first responders, law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel, who participated in evacuating and rescuing people at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon after the terrorist attacks on September 11. It also expresses Congress' profound sorrow for the deaths and injuries suffered by first responders and extends its deepest sympathies to the families and loved ones of those who died.

I might say I visited ground zero a number of times and have again been overwhelmed by the outpouring of first responders again trying to pick through the rubble and trying to help and just trying to give comfort. First responders, ironworkers, my dad was an ironworker for 40 years. It is something that really makes us proud to be Americans, proud to be New Yorkers.

Like so many people, like so many New Yorkers, I have been personally affected by the attacks. My good friend and constituent, Sally Reganhard, lost her son Christian, who was also my constituent. Christian was a firefighter for only 6 weeks in New York City, and on September 11 he responded to the call of duty as he had during those past 6 weeks. We memorialized him last Friday at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. It was very, very difficult. There were thousands and thousands of people there, and firefighters from all around the country and Canada.

Although my friend is very sad, indeed she and I and everyone who knew Christian are also very proud. He will always be with us and will always be a great role model and hero, again, as will all the other first responders who responded on those days.

All Americans owe so much to these brave men and women that Congress is

taking the time to recognize. It is the least we can do. Again I want to thank all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have done so much to make this resolution a reality. We will continue to provide aid and comfort to those who suffered the terrible tragedies of September 11.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST).

Mr. GILCHREST. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

I want to thank the chairman and ranking member and the staff on both sides for bringing this resolution to the floor in what really is a timely manner for us to say a few words to, in the way we can, to honor those people who went to the tragedy to save lives and to comfort the afflicted.

Whether they were firemen or policemen or medical personnel or just an average citizen responding to a tragedy, they responded in a way to save lives. They responded in a way to comfort those who were injured. They did not respond to political ideology, they did not respond to religious differences, they did not respond to the cultural divide that separates us from much of the rest of the world. They responded, pure and simple, to human suffering, human tragedy and human need. This is what we come here today to honor.

It is very difficult for us to comprehend the madness that caused this tragedy. That is in fact pervasive and persistent in a tiny fraction of the human population. But it is easy to understand why so many brave men and women gave their lives on that tragic morning of September 11. It is easy for us, and we should always remember the unity of purpose for which they gave their lives and for which we are here this afternoon honoring that courage and that strength. It is for those young men and women, those middle-aged men and women, and those senior citizens that gave their lives that morning and for their friends and for their relatives and for America, to never forget. We will prevail.

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, to briefly close, we want to thank on the subcommittee and the full committee the work of the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for bringing this important piece of legislation to our attention. We want to thank the leadership of our committee, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), for making sure it is being expeditiously considered.

Madam Speaker, there are some things that you do not think you are going to see in life. Many in this Cham-

ber and have had the opportunity to visit the carnage at the Pentagon and what was the World Trade Center, what is known as ground zero, but no one in this Chamber was there as it was occurring. But the men and women that we honor with H. Con. Res. 233 were in fact there.

I was struck, I come from a small town, I know my ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO), does not come from a big area like the gentleman from New York City (Mr. ENGEL), but from time to time in our local newspapers we will see a display such as it this, and it will be the smiling graduating class of a police or fire academy.

□ 1645

On September 23, this ran in The New York Times. Madam Speaker, these faces are the faces of those who died in an attempt to save others, not just an attempt, they saved countless others on the morning of September 11. It is not until that we can look at two full pages in the newspaper of lives that were full and vibrant prior to that morning of September 11 that we recognize again not only the gravity of what these terrorists have done to our country, but the raw courage of the first responders and the fire, the police and the Port Authority of New York City and in Washington, D.C. as well. So I am certain that every one of our colleagues will support this legislation, and I urge them to do that.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 233. Passage of this resolution pays proper respect to those brave public servants who were first to arrive at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon after the events that unfolded September 11, 2001.

Madam Speaker, it has been nearly two months since the Nation was shocked into a new reality by agents of terror. In the days and weeks following these events, Americans of all races and creeds have been impressed with both the magnitude of the task those who responded first had to perform and the valor with which these public servants performed their duties.

People all over the world have taken to calling these men and women heroes because of their selflessness, and this body should be no exception. It is fitting, then that we take time here today to honor those heroes. Those first to respond must hear clearly that America says thank you. Those first responders who were injured or lost their lives must also be recognized. To those brave public servants and their families I say, "thank you for all you have sacrificed for this nation."

Madam Speaker we find ourselves in a new war. In this new war, we must develop new levels of respect for those who choose to save lives for a living. The contribution they have chosen to make to society has taken on a renewed importance. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we continue to find ways to integrate the actions of the various civic, state and federal institutions whose personnel must coordinate actions at the scene of a tragedy.

This Congress is united in its support for those citizens whose job it is to save the day.

We thank you and honor you for the work that you have done, and we ask that God continue to bless you as we face this uncertain future.

Mr. CRAWLEY. Madam Speaker, first I would like to thank Congressman WATTS and my friend, Congressman ENGEL of New York for sponsoring this important resolution.

Who are first responders?

First responders are the brave policemen and women who raced to the scene of these horrific crimes against humanity. They are the firemen and women who raced to crumbling buildings veiled in stinging smoke and filled with fire without any thought to their personal safety. They were the emergency rescue personnel, EMT's, that perished in last month's terrorist attacks so that others may live.

I do not think it is an overstatement to say that the American spirit is embodied in the way these brave men and women lived and died.

What makes a nation great?

Our nation is built upon the principle that all men and women are created equal and free. Our government institutions, our economic might and our preeminent military strength all make America an envied model. But they are more the result than the cause of greatness.

The true source of our greatness is a national spirit that imbues so many with the will to give what Abraham Lincoln called, "the last full measure of devotion." Defending a cause larger than one's self. Risking their lives so that others may be saved. That is what these men and women did, and I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring these fallen heroes.

This bill is in memory of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. May we always remember those who died so that others may live. And may we honor these brave men and women for their last full measure of devotion.

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 233, expressing Congress' profound sorrow for the death and injuries suffered by first responders in the aftermath of the September 11 Terrorist attacks.

As our Nation resolutely moves forward in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks, we remember the bravery and selfless sacrifices of all the men and women in uniform who rushed in to save their fellow citizens in the myriad emergency situations which arose from the September 11th barbaric, terrorist attacks on our Nation.

In my own district we lost over 35 firefighters and police officers in the September 11th attacks on New York, in addition to over 65 next of kin. These brave first responders paid the ultimate sacrifice in the valiant execution of their duties and their heroism will remain an enduring legacy to our Nation. We must never forget that thousands of innocent American citizens were saved by the actions of these first responders. We thank and honor them for their service to their country and to their fellow citizens. Accordingly I urge my colleagues to support this important measure.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, with this resolution we honor those who on September 11 paid the ultimate sacrifice—the firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and police who are the first to arrive at the scene of an emergency, and the last to leave.

According to the International Association of Fire Fighters, more public safety officers were lost in the attack on the United States yesterday than any other single event in modern history.

As the Nation mourns the deaths of thousands of our fellow citizens, as we take stock of the destruction caused by last week's terrorist attacks, we should also pause for a moment to reflect on the brave men and women in New York City who put their lives on the line to protect fellow citizens.

In every small town and suburb and big city across America, there are people just like the over 300 first responders who gave their lives in New York. In Michigan, we too have experienced the loss of emergency personnel. Last year alone, four Michigan firefighters lost their lives. Each of these deaths is a tragedy for family, friends, and community.

What happened at the World Trade Center in New York will live in our memories forever. We can be proud that at a time of great peril, the Nation's first responders answered the call, conducting themselves with a selflessness and dedication that does credit to themselves, their city, and their country.

Many thousands of people would not be alive today if it were not for the heroic efforts of these men and women. In one of the country's darkest hours, they kept faith with their colleagues, with those in need, and with their country.

Our Nation's founders were deeply committed to the idea that the individual had an obligation to serve the community. The Nation's first responders live this ideal every day. They lived it again on September 11, and because they did, they gave their lives.

While we have cause to mourn these deaths, we should also celebrate the values their lives exhibited, values that represent the very best of America.

We have suffered a grievous loss. But the wonderful thing about America is that we will bounce back. For every firefighter who fell on September 11, someone else will take his place. For every emergency responder who paid with his life, another will emerge. For every police and port authority officer who fell in the line of duty, another citizen will answer the call. That is the American way.

On September 11, the Nation's firefighters showed the world what courage means. If we expect the fire services—many of whom depend on volunteers—to deal with terrorist attacks, we have a responsibility to provide them with the help they need so that they can continue to protect lives and property.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the conference on the defense authorization bill, I will be pushing for a large increase in the authorized funding for the Assistance to Firefighters Grants Program to \$1 billion for each fiscal years 2002, 2003, and 2004.

Our thoughts and our prayers are with the families of the fallen heroes to whom we owe so much. God bless those who have died, God bless their families, and God bless America.

Mr. WALSH. Madam Speaker, I also rise in support of this resolution sponsored by Congressmen ENGEL and WATTS, that expresses our profound sorrow for the senseless loss of life and injuries suffered by our heroic first responders as a result of the World Trade Center, Pentagon, and Pennsylvania tragedies on Tuesday, September 11, 2001. My prayers, thoughts and deepest sympathies are with their families and loved ones at this definitive moment in American history.

Tocqueville once said of Americans, "They show with complacency how an enlightened

regard for themselves constantly prompts them to assist one another and inclines their willingness to sacrifice a portion of their time and property to the welfare of the state." These words describe the 300 firefighters and 70 police officers that have died in this senseless tragedy. Their names are forever inscribed on the portals of fame. America now truly understands how much we as a nation owe these heroic people, both those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and those who continue to serve with honor day in and day out. God help us always to have these men and women who believe in what they are doing and who will fight to the very end for what they believe.

This resolution also speaks to the unity of public safety officers. There is an old saying in the fire service that goes, "Firemen are a brotherhood. They do not care what department a man belongs, if he is a fireman enrolled for the same purpose, fighting under the same banner, they are ready to extend the hand of fellowship." This is true literally and figuratively. Literally, there are many families who serve together as firefighters and police officers or both in New York City. Currently, they are working to help recover their figurative brothers and sisters. This figurative bond was also evident with the outpouring of help that came into the New York City, and Virginia from around the country and the world. So much help, that some of it had to be turned away. The literal and figurative unity is stronger than ever as a result of the attacks on our country.

When I visited the Pentagon and "Ground Zero" with President Bush in New York, I saw first hand the destruction and the tireless rescue efforts underway. I thought to myself, "why do these people, the firefighters and police officers, do what they do?" I soon recalled a book I had read in the 1970's by Dennis Smith, a retired New York City fireman and founder of Firehouse Magazine who also assisted in the rescue efforts. In his classic book "Report from Engine Co. 82", an account of his life on a South Bronx fireman, Smith said after recovering a victim who had perished in a fire, "I don't say anything further, nor does Billy, as I look up to his eyes. They are almost fully closed, but I can see they are wet and teary. The corneas are red from heat and smoke, and light reflects from the watered surface, and they sparkle. I wish my wife, my mother, and everyone who has ever asked me why I do what I do, could see the humanity, the sympathy, the sadness of these eyes, because this is the reason I continue to be a firefighter." America saw this same scene played out time and time again on September 11th and the following days. As a result, we as a nation can start to understand why they continuously sacrifice their lives and pay them a long overdue thank you.

We thank them, we praise them, and we will never forget them. God bless these heroes, their families and God bless America.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 233.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of

those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 233.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6 p.m.

□ 1800

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GILCHREST) at 6 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

House Concurrent Resolution 243, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 2559, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 2910, by the yeas and nays;

House Concurrent Resolution 233, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER MEDAL OF VALOR IN RESPONSE TO TERRORIST ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 243.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr.